

THE CAUSE OF CANCER.*

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Being interested in the subject of cancer, I have followed the work in the New York State Laboratory for the last two years and learned with interest the results obtained by Dr. Gaylord and embodied in his lecture at the Johns Hopkins Hospital and in his paper in the *American Journal of the Medical Sciences* for May of this year.

In order to prove conclusively that a given organism is the cause of cancer it is necessary :

- (1) To find or isolate the organism.
- (2) To produce cancer by inoculating the organism into another body.
- (3) To recover the organism from the cancer thus produced.

I have had the opportunity of examining some of Dr. Gaylord's specimens and it is certain that the nodules he produced in the guinea-pig's lungs are cancer. He, however, used peritoneal fluid and not a pure culture of the organism and hence the first and second requisites are not properly fulfilled. He cannot exclude the possibility of cancer-cells from the patient having been carried over in the fluid to the guinea-pig, and it is a well established fact that cancer-cells may be transplanted and grow. The third requirement is barely touched upon and no proof of its successful accomplishment is adduced.

On page 511 of the journal above mentioned he speaks of being able to cultivate his germ with "comparative regularity," and we are given the medium upon which

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